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Issue 10 | November 2007

HGZine

Free Magazine For Handheld Gamers. Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...

**16 DS
AND PSP
REVIEWS**

EXCLUSIVE!

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

We talk to the developers behind
this year's biggest blockbuster

Advance Wars: Days of Ruin

The tactical shooter returns!

Secret Agent Clank

Ratchet's sidekick goes solo

FULL REVIEWS!



Tomb Raider Anniversary
Happy Anniversary for Lara?



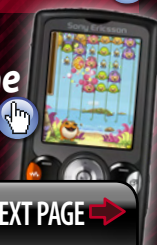
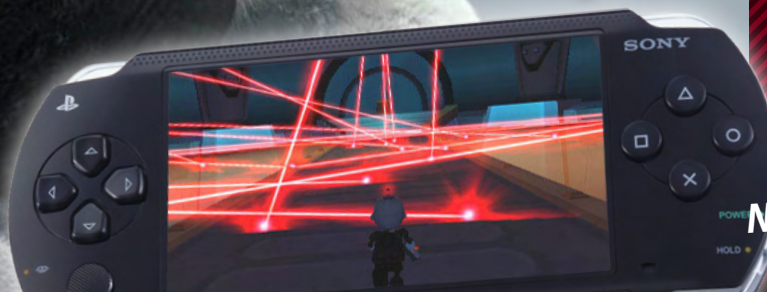
**Syphon Filter:
Logan's Shadow**
Logan's back!



SmackDown vs Raw 2008
The definitive verdict

PLUS!

News and reviews of the
latest mobile games



Welcome to HGZine

It's nearly that time of year, isn't it? The time when we pray that our neatly handwritten requests for a PSP Slim & Lite and a copy of *Sega Rally* won't be mistaken for a new shaver, a pair of socks and a garish tie.

Fortunately, we can make sure that you never buy (or are never bought) a duffer ever again, as you can be sure that our reviews are all the buying advice you'll ever need.

This month, for example, we've got some absolute gems in the shape of *SOCOM Tactical Strike*, *Syphon Filter: Logan's Shadow* and *Race Driver: Create & Race*, as well as the definitive verdicts on *SmackDown vs Raw 2008* and *Sims 2 Castaway*. And next month we'll have the complete lowdown on all the games coming out in 2008, but until then, I hope you enjoy what we have for you this month.

Dean Mortlock, Editor
HGzine@gamerzines.com

READER FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of the new issue!

DON'T MISS!
This month's highlights

EXPLOSIVE FIRST LOOK!

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

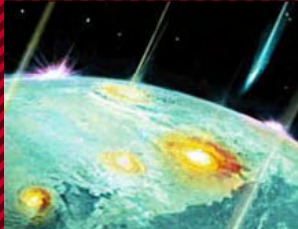
How do you begin to fit a book and film that size into a tiny console? We don't know, but we know someone who does... PAGE 15

Syphon Filter: Logan's Shadow

The stunning sequel to one of our favourite PSP games of all time P23

Advance Wars: Days of Ruin

The battle continues P4



Secret Agent Clank

Ratchet's sidekick breaks away for his own epic adventure P8



QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

SONY PSP

Secret Agent Clank
The Golden Compass
The Simpsons Game
Destroy All Humans: Big Willy Unleashed
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed
SmackDown vs Raw 2008
SOCOM Tactical Strike
Syphon Filter: Logan's Shadow
Tomb Raider Anniversary
PSP News Roundup
PSP Reviews Roundup

NINTENDO DS

Advance Wars: Days of Ruin

Rayman Raving Rabbids 2
The Golden Compass
Sega Superstars Tennis
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed
Orcs & Elves
Race Driver: Create & Race
Sims 2 Castaway
Horse Life
World Snooker 2008
Deal or no Deal
DS News Roundup
DS Reviews

MOBILE PHONE

News
Reviews

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MEET THE TEAM

They're a collective games reviewing machine that's well-oiled by a monthly update of top new games. They are, quite simply, 'The Team'.



Kath Brice

Kath wanted to go to a sun-kissed desert island this month for 'research'. We said no.
PLAYING THIS MONTH: Sims 2 Castaway



Chris Schilling

Our writing mammoth is once again plunged into the icy pool of handheld gaming. He loves it.
PLAYING THIS MONTH: The Golden Compass



Ian Morris

Dean and Ian watched the WWE in Cardiff this month, and will never quite be the same again.
PLAYING THIS MONTH: Race Driver: C&R



Mark Ramshaw

If he was a Simpsons character, we suspect that Mark would be the Comicbook Shop Guy.
PLAYING THIS MONTH: The Simpsons Game



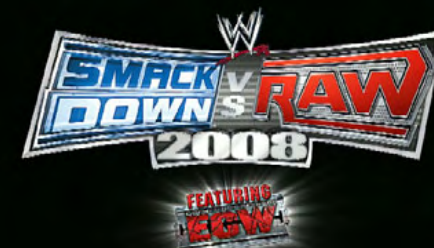
Dave Perrett

If you spot Dave on the train with his PSP, chances are that he's playing *SOCOM*. Again.
PLAYING THIS MONTH: SOCOM Tactical Strike

FIGHTING STYLE

"I WAS RAISED TO FIGHT."

John Cena



REPLAY THIS VIDEO



HOW WILL YOU PLAY?
HARDCORE • HIGH FLYER • SHOWMAN • BRAWLER
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DS

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Intelligent Systems
Heritage: Wario Ware Touched!, Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door
Link: Nothing as yet
ETA: Feb 2008

Units are now diagonal-facing to give them much more of a 3D feel

Brown skies and grey vehicles in a Nintendo game? *Days of Ruin* is clearly going to be a bit different

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of *Advance Wars: Days of Ruin*

Navigating your way around the maps is simplicity itself

Is this apocalypse Black Hole's doing? We don't know yet, but we wouldn't bet against it

Advance Wars: Days of Ruin

LATEST NEWS

Armageddon outta here...

What's the story?

Only that the Most Addictive Handheld Game Ever is getting another DS-flavoured sequel. This time however, we've got a whole new dark style that's a world away from the cartoonish Tonka wars of the originals.

What do we know?

That meteor storms have wiped out ninety per cent of the Earth's population. And that the remaining survivors are battling over what remains, with limited food and mysterious diseases all over the shop. As it turns out, the new look's not the only fresh feature – we finally get an online mode so we can engage the enemy via Wi-Fi, and there's map-sharing too. Created a cartographical tour de force? You can battle your mates on it over the Internet. Brilliant.

When do we get more?

It's making its debut in the US in January, with a rumoured February release over here. Expect a hands-on preview (or a review if you're lucky) in issue 13 of HGZine.

Anything else to declare?

It's leaner and meaner than the bloated and unbalanced *Dual Strike* – which means no more CO super powers, and those that remain have been significantly toned down. Oh, and no more dual-screened battles to detract from the purity of the basic gameplay. Good, we say.

"It's leaner and meaner than the bloated and unbalanced *Dual Strike*"

After the meteors struck...

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Wii

NINTENDO DS



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ANIMATION STUDIOS



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Publisher: Ubisoft

Developer: Ubisoft Paris

Heritage: GRAV, Red Steel

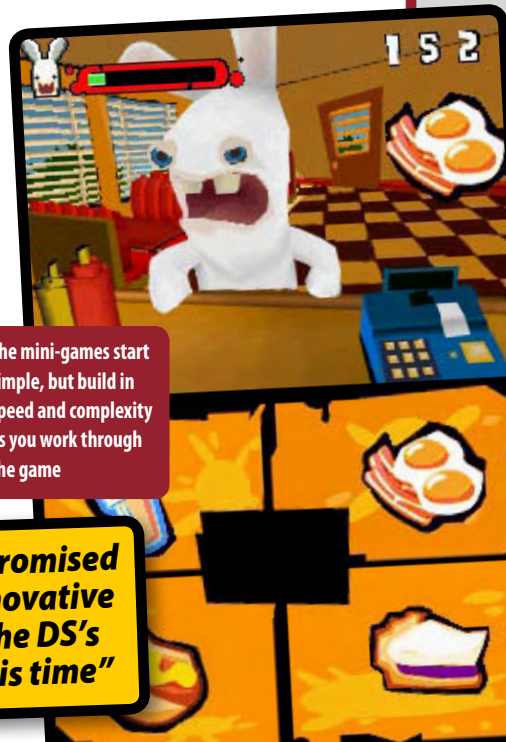
Link: <http://rabbids.uk.ubi.com>

ETA: Late November

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Rayman Raving Rabbids

This game is identical to one in the Wii original, but most of the tasks are brand new

You can customise your rabbit's appearance, from clothing them to giving them hand-drawn body art



The mini-games start simple, but build in speed and complexity as you work through the game

"We're promised more innovative uses of the DS's stylus this time"

Rayman Raving Rabbids 2

The psychotic carrot-munchers return

LATEST NEWS

What's the story?

The original *Rayman Raving Rabbids* was a big success at the launch of the Nintendo Wii, but the DS version was somewhat overlooked. A shame, as it was probably the second-best version of the game, with a rather different platforming approach and a cracking sense of humour to boot.

What do we know?

Not content with invading Rayman's world, the goggle-eyed lettuce lovers have grander plans to rule our planet. To successfully take over the Earth though, they have to engage in several training missions to ready themselves for global domination. This is achieved by – yep, you guessed it – a series of inventive mini-games, which are said to follow the Wii version very closely.

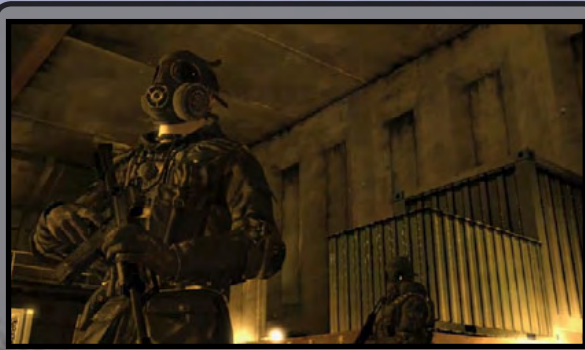
It certainly looks very nice, and we're also promised more innovative uses of the DS's features this time, with a total of 36 unusual missions to complete. These range from a Simon Says-type memory game where you have to pick which order the rabbids made a noise, to a revolting task involving prodding bits of chewed food with the stylus for the rabbit to digest.

When do we get more?

The release date hasn't been confirmed at the time of writing, but expect it before the month's out. Hopefully we'll have a review in the next issue.

Anything else to declare?

You can wirelessly compete against three friends in the multiplayer mode, while there's a music creation tool where you use the stylus to strum a guitar or bash some drums.



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COMES CLOSE TO THE HIGH QUALITY
FOUND WITHIN CALL OF DUTY" - 360 MAGAZINE

"ASTONISHINGLY BRUTAL"
- OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

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- PC GAMER

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PSP

Qwark was actually an enemy of sorts in Ratchet and Clank's first adventure

Publisher: Sony
Developer: High Impact Games
Heritage: Ratchet and Clank: Size Matters
Link: No link yet
ETA: Early 2008

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Secret Agent Clank

"To defeat his enemies, Clank is equipped with several Bond-esque gadgets"

Clank looks rather dapper in his tuxedo, we must say

The laser-dodging sequences works surprisingly well here

Secret Agent Clank:
licence to thrill...

Secret Agent Clank

Ratchet's sidekick goes all 007 on us

LATEST NEWS

What's the story?

The makers of the PSP game *Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters* have been secretly beaver away on a Ratchet-less adventure using the same impressive game engine. Playing as the vertically-challenged robot himself, you're tasked with rescuing Ratchet from being found guilty of a crime he didn't commit. It's a simple case of using your finely-honed espionage skills to find out who's behind the accusations.

What do we know?

Events are set before the upcoming PS3 title *Tools of Destruction*, but after *Size Matters*, for those who are interested in where this falls in the Ratchet canon. To defeat his enemies, Clank is equipped with several Bond-esque gadgets, like cufflink bombs and a bow tie boomerang. He'll also be able to utilise his martial arts expertise with his special 'Clank-fu' moves to knock out any foes that are stupid enough to get in his way.

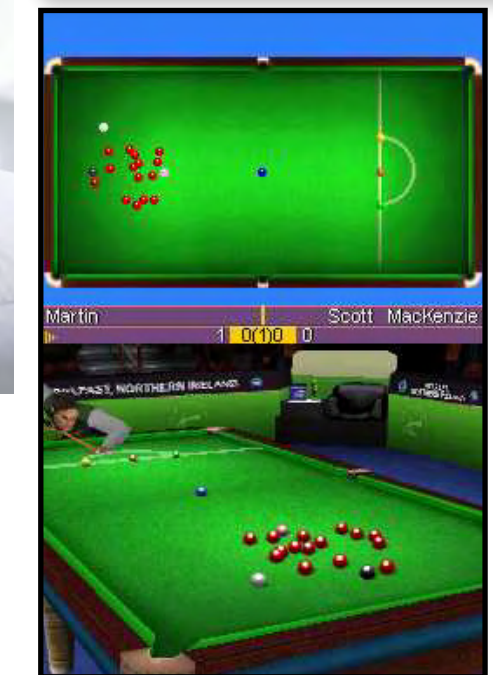
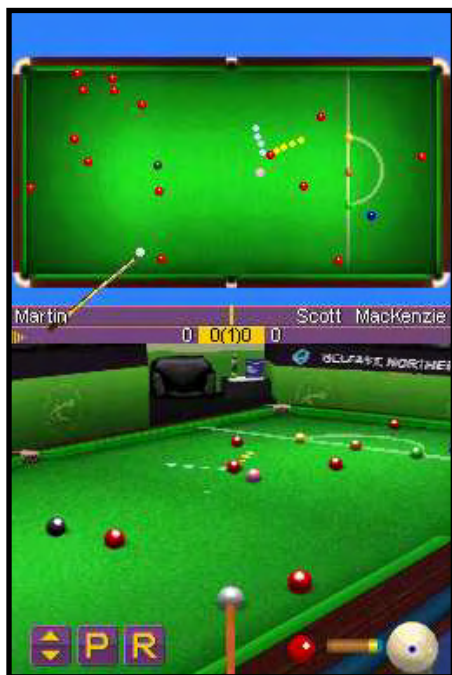
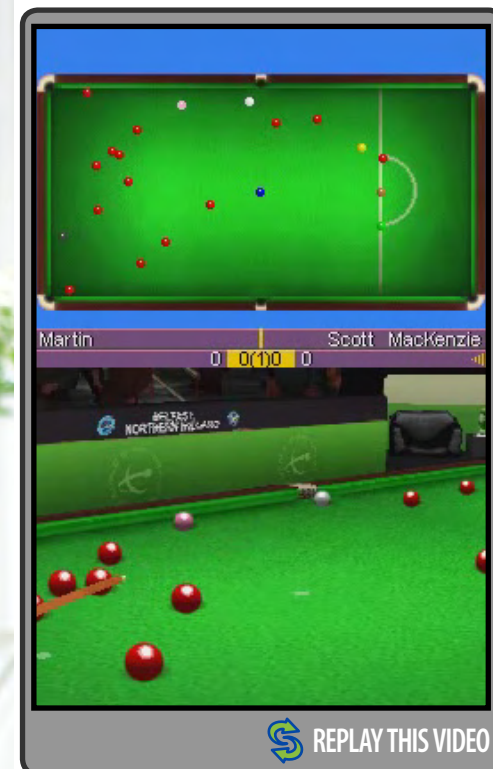
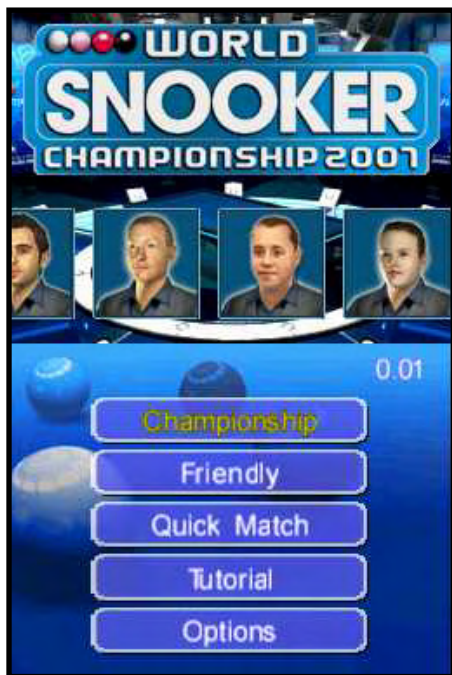
To add a bit of variety from the action-adventuring, there are sections where it turns into a curious rhythm-action/QTE (Quick Time Event) hybrid, with timed button presses manoeuvring Clank past laser beams and pesky security cameras.

When do we get more?

No release date as yet, but it's surprisingly far on in development. With the engine already in place, it's looking like an early 2008 release for this little beauty.

Anything else to declare?

There's at least one other playable character. For one level you get to control the useless 'superhero' Captain Qwark.



the perfect break
world snooker championship

NINTENDO DS

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PSP

Incoming

Coming soon to your handheld



FlatOut: Head On

Publisher: Warner Bros | ETA: 30th November

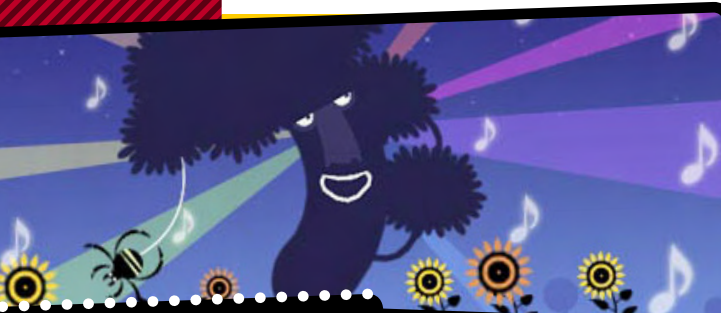
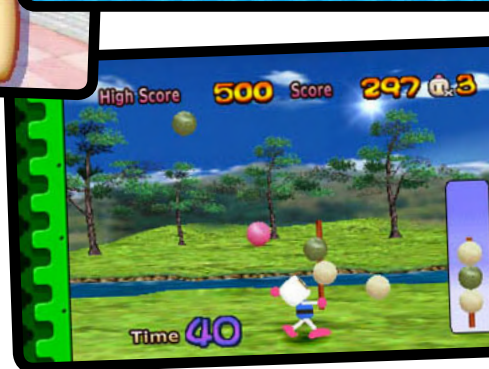
This massively underrated racing/car-smashing series seems to be destined to always live in *Burnout's* shadow. A shame, as the forthcoming PSP version looks like it could be just as fun as the insanely addictive 360 game. We'll give you the definitive verdict next month.



Bomberman Land

Publisher: Hudson | ETA: February 2008

Bomberman has somehow never quite succeeded outside the traditional multiplayer arena. Still, with 50 mini-games and a sizeable story mode, there's bound to be something in *Land* you'll enjoy, even if you just revert to the maze-based battles – thankfully available in single-cart mode – that have defined the series.



Patapon

Publisher: Sony | ETA: Q1 2008

Easily winning our Favourite Screenshot of the Month competition, this highly stylised 'game' is the latest from the maker of the brilliant *LocoRoco*, and has you tapping buttons in a rhythmic fashion to lead your army to victory. It seems a bit of a curious beast, but it looks and sounds fabulous. If it's half as good as *Roco*, we'll go loco for it (sorry).

ROUGH CUTS
More PSP games...

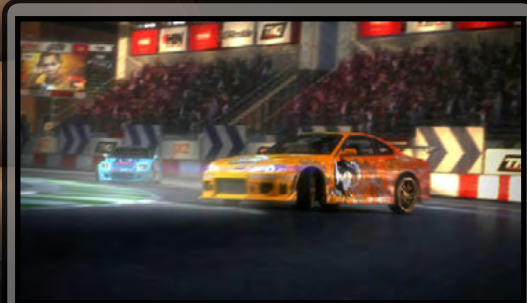
Disgaea: Afternoon of Darkness

Publisher: NIS | ETA: 7th December

The life-robbing strategy series arrives in handheld form, so now you've an excuse not to talk to anyone on your travels as well as at home. *Afternoon of Darkness* (what next – 'Evening of Mayhem?') will provide the same mix of quirky humour and frighteningly deep tactical battling, and could even usurp *FF Tactics* from your PSP.

COMING
SOON

Telly Addicts (23rd November)... Ferrari Challenge (23rd November)... NBA Live 08 (7th December)... Football Manager Handheld 08 (Christmas)... Hard Rock Casino (18th January 2008)...
Downstream Panic! (Q1 2008)... Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII (Q2 2008)... Iron Man (Summer 2008)



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DS

iNCOMING



Coming to a dualscreen near you!



Cooking Mama 2: Dinner With Friends

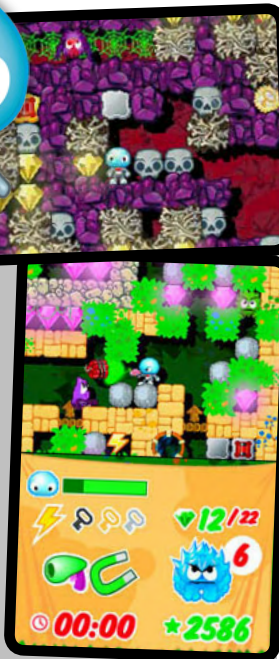
Publisher: Majesco | ETA: Q1 2008

The sequel to the surprise DS smash has a raft of extras for the Delias among you, including a wealth of new recipes (each with brand new mini-games), kitchen customisation options and (yes!) a superior peeling mechanic...

Boulder Dash – Rocks!

Publisher: 10Tacle Studios | ETA: 30th November

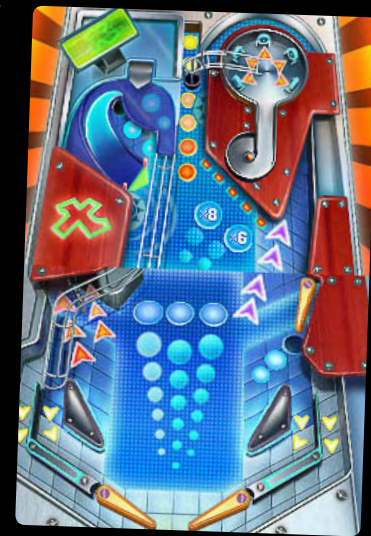
Something of a career resurrection for an early 80s favourite, *Boulder Dash – Rocks!* is due to hit both DS and PSP at the end of November. We're more intrigued by the DS version, because – despite its graphical inferiority – we've got the feeling the stylus controls will work a treat.



Powershot Pinball Constructor

Publisher: Oxygen | ETA: 15th February

Anyone who's played *Metroid Prime Pinball* will know that table-tilting thrills can work on a handheld, and – as the name suggests – *Powershot Pinball Constructor* will allow you to make your own bumper-bashing masterpiece to share with your pals. Or, if you're not particularly creative, just play on the ones the game provides.



ROUGH CUTS

More DS games...



Panzer Tactics

Publisher: 10Tacle Studios | ETA: Winter

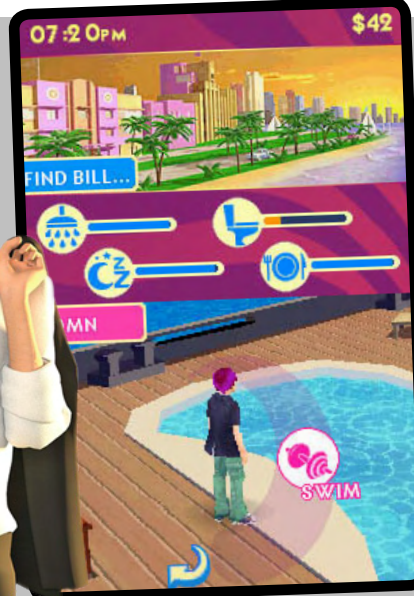
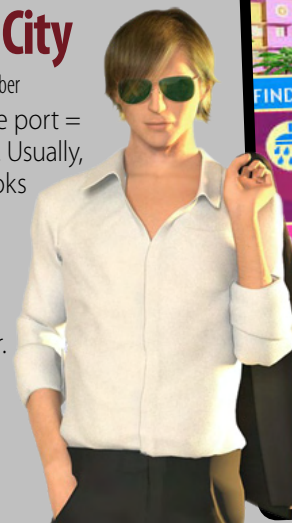
A bit of old school WWII hex-based strategy is on its way to your DS in the next few months, and it looks to be a bit more complex than the likes of *Advance Wars*. With three separate campaigns, thirty missions and an amazing 150 unit types, this should easily sate your inner military tactician.



Miami Nights: Singles In The City

Publisher: Ubisoft | ETA: 7th December

Mini-games + mobile port = alarm bells ringing. Usually, anyway. *Miami Nights* looks to be a cut above the usual fare, with its social simulation gameplay allowing you to become an actor, model or singer. In truth, we're just intrigued by how the shaving mini-game (yep, really) is going to work.



COMING SOON

Yamaha Super Cross (23rd November)... Cars Mater-National (30th November)... Code Lyoko (December)... Boogie (Christmas)... de Blob (February 2008)...
Dragon's Lair (Q1 2008)... Civilisation Revolution (Spring 2008)... Sega Superstars Tennis (First half of 2008)

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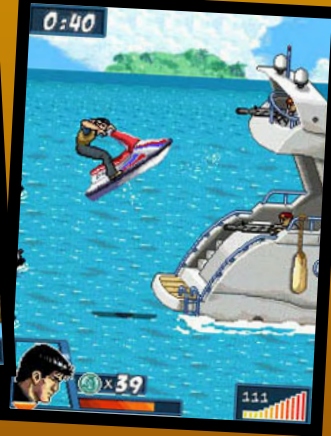


The mob thought they'd killed me, Wrong, I'm back, headless but not brainless. Deadhead, huh. I'm an ex private dick with guts and I crave revenge. It's time for those shiny-shoed wise guys to face the music. Some smart detective work and my ingenious interchangeable head scam will see me nail the creeps.

OUT OCTOBER 2007

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MOBILE NEWS



XIII Covert Identity

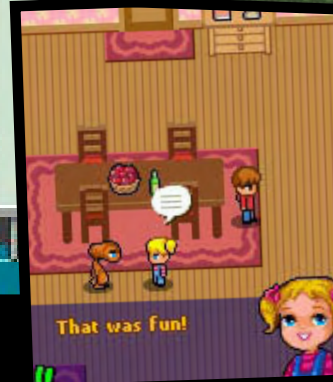
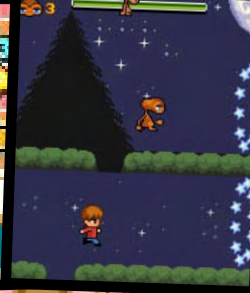
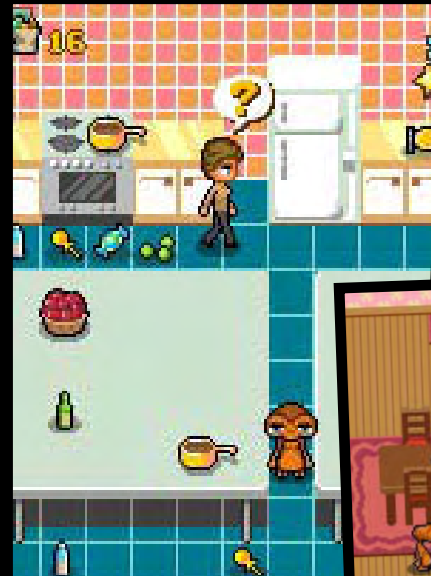
Publisher: Gameloft

Based on a ultra-violent French comic book, the home console version of *XIII* didn't exactly set the sales charts alight when it was published a few years back, but that doesn't seem to have dented Gameloft's faith in the franchise, as the company is producing a new version for mobile phone platforms. Graphically things are looking very promising indeed, but time will tell if the gameplay is up to the same standard.

Championship Manager 2008

Publisher: Eidos

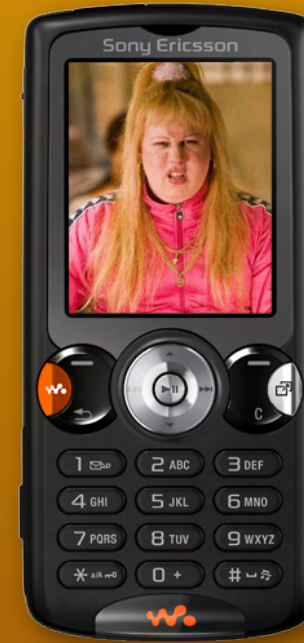
If you've ever played *Championship Manager* in the past then you'll be fully aware of how much of your valuable time it can soak up. Addicts of this long-running football management franchise may have mixed feelings about plans to release it on mobiles, but on the plus side, Eidos promise it will contain all the detail of the PC version. On the negative side, if it's your pocket how will you ever escape it?



ET

Publisher: ojam

It's been a long wait but fans of Spielberg's lovable alien may finally be getting a decent videogame to savour. ojam's upcoming mobile release is looking very promising indeed, with a cute stylized look and the ability to indulge in all sorts of *ET*-related mini games, many of which are based on events in the popcorn-friendly family flick. Memories of the atrocious Atari 2600 may well be banished once and for all with this appealing title. We shall see.



Little Britain

Publisher: Glu

It may not be as funny as it used to be but *Little Britain* is a media juggernaut that simply refuses to slow down. We've already had the toys, the books and even a PS2 videogame, and now it's the turn of mobile phones to get the Vicky Pollard treatment. Predictably based around several mini-games, it should please hardcore fans of the series, but time will tell if it represents a worthwhile download for everyone else.



Assassin's Creed

Publisher: Gameloft

Ubisoft's upcoming next generation stealth-em-up is currently stirring up a fair degree of anticipation on the home consoles but mobile gamers need not feel left out, as Gameloft has acquired the rights to produce a version for phones. The publisher has only released a handful of screens thus far but things are looking extremely tasty indeed. Just like the home console editions, we suspect that this is definitely one to keep an eye on.

PSP

HANDS ON

The Golden Compass

Living in a Materials world

Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy of novels has enraptured both kids and adults alike and has gained much critical favour – *Materials* fans steadfastly insist that 'their' series is a much more accomplished set of stories than JK Rowling's phenomenon.

It's fair to say that Sega is trying its best to ensure that the game of the imminent movie of the first novel in the series, *The Golden Compass* (known as *Northern Lights* in the UK), lives up to this universally accessible appeal. In handing development duties to *Enter The Matrix* developer Shiny Entertainment, Sega has found an experienced hand to produce its biggest license to date, and the signs are looking very promising indeed.

It's the PSP version that we've seen the most of, and it's quite incredible how close it is to the home console versions. You control three of the main characters – lead heroine Lyra, Pan the shape-shifting demon, and Iorek, a gigantic bear. The latter's sections are naturally combat-based, as he uses his giant paws to swipe away at any enemies who cross his path. Meanwhile, Lyra and Pan work together

in fairly traditional platforming sections, while the former also gets her own levels with a more exploration-based bent, as well as a stealth section or two.

Graphically, the PSP version has marginally weaker textures, but otherwise looks remarkably like the PS2 game. We're confident that Shiny's past experience will help it get the gameplay balance right, but so far there's something for everyone. We'll bring you the full review of *The Golden Compass* in next month's HGZine. ●

Serafina Pekkala – played by Eva Green in the film – is the witch queen who helps Lyra on her journey

Iorek's armour – and sheer size – makes him a formidable character to control

DUAL DIRECTIONS

Pure gold for the DS

The DS version of the game is being developed completely separately, by Artificial Mind and Movement, creators of *Monster House* and the forthcoming *Wet*. It's a very different beast to its PSP counterpart, with a pseudo-3D look complementing the more traditional 2D action. Again, it has several different gameplay types, with touchscreen use of the titular compass required to progress, and its puzzle element is certainly more pronounced.

"It's incredible how close the PSP version is to the console ones"



PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of The Golden Compass

It's heartening to see that Sega has adopted the dark tone of the book and also the film

Despite the mish-mash of gameplay styles, Sega has kept the aesthetic very consistent

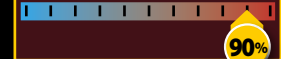


HOW COMPLETE?



It's so far so good for this movie license

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



Compass pointers

We talk to Shiny's Lead Designer Dax Berg about the PSP game...

His *Dark Materials* is a hugely popular series of books, and the film is set to be massive, so does that add to the pressure of making the game?

Most of the pressure comes from the sheer 'scope' of who the game is for. We know we have to appeal to an array of players from young adults to hard core fans to casual movie enthusiasts, providing different experiences for each player.

One of the stages is named *Lyra The Deceiver*. Fans of the book will know exactly what you'll have to do in this section



It's unclear whether Iorek's blacksmith skills play a part in the later stages, but we wouldn't bet against some sort of mini-game



The PSP game makes a decent fist of capturing the feel of the film – we're confident it'll be a big hit

"We worked hard at making sure we appealed the fans of the series"

The designers have been allowed to work closely with those making the film – do you think this will make a big difference in how closely the game follows the source material?

We worked hard at making sure we appealed the fans of the series, as well as the new fans that will come from the film. There are a few places in which we've taken slight liberties to provide a solid 'game environment' but first and foremost we tried to keep with the locations from the book and obviously the screenplay, too.

The film is around two hours long, but the game will be much longer – will the game contain elements from the book that are missing from the film?

Yes, there are several large environment locations that are based specifically from the book that were not included in the movie due to time and budget. When working with Chris Weitz (the director of the movie) he was very excited to see some of these locations from the book that he was unable to reproduce in his telling of the story.

Will the PSP version play similarly to the home console versions, or have you had to tweak anything to suit the handheld game?

Other than bringing down the resolution of the models, the game on the PSP plays closer to the PS2 (and PS3) version than any other game I have seen to date. They are not just similar games – they are nearly the exact same game. To fit a game of this magnitude into hardware the size of an ashtray still amazes me.

Finally, what one element of the PSP game are you most proud of?

The ability to capture so many aspects of the *His Dark Materials* world in the given time frame so that it could be released alongside of the movie.

We could have taken one of half a dozen of our core mechanics and made an entire *Golden Compass* game around that alone. That however would have played to only one audience type. The ability to mesh so many types of gameplay, and to do this with minimal redesign so that all of these elements have a polish to them is rare among games that fall under this genre. ●

GOLD FEVER

Making the game of the film of the book...



Lead Vocals



Bearing up



Deep Pan



Lead vocals

For added authenticity, many of the stars of the film provide the voices in the game, including young Londoner Dakota Blue Richards as Lyra Belacqua. "This is Shiny's third game based on a movie license and we are getting better every game on how to work around a movie production pipeline," claims Berg. And who are we to argue?

PSP

HANDS ON

The Simpsons Game

Could The Simpsons finally get the videogame they deserve?

What started as a series of clips on the Tracey Ullman show and eventually became an all-conquering, yellow-tinged satire of the American Dream has spawned 19 series, 400 episodes, plus enough dodgy T-shirts to clothe the world's homeless ten times over. There have also been the inevitable videogame spin-offs along the way, but we suspect that this latest one is also likely to be the best by some margin.

It may look like business as usual in digital Springfield, but peek beneath that yellow-skinned exterior and you'll find a lot of funny bones. This is one TV spin-off where the original writers have been involved, and the result is a game infused with the same humour and comical violence as the show itself. Best of all, it also has the same cheeky knack for turning pop culture references into comedy gold, though in this case it's often other videogames that get the treatment. Fans who know as much about *Final Fantasy* as they do about Homer's favourite snacks will get maximum enjoyment, and of course enjoy maximum smugness.

What's so funny?

The in-joke approach has also enabled the designers to come up with something enjoyable by even those with MTV attention spans. This isn't so much a game that features several sub-games, as a collection of sub-games glued together with gags. Springfield itself remains the hub of the action, but with five playable characters, loads of hidden features and elements, and sub-levels that spin the gameplay in

The DS version features stylus-based puzzle solving and four multiplayer games



The whole Simpsons family – even Maggie – get their moment to shine

different directions, the result is refreshingly – and oddly – varied.

We've yet to play the finished version, but on first impressions it looks like the only Duff thing in *The Simpsons Game* will be the lack of references to Homer's favourite beverage. ●

LEVEL BEST

Three of The Simpsons Game's finest parodies



Medal of Homer

Colossal Donut

Mob Rules

Medal of Homer

If you're going to parody a whole bunch of videogames, it makes sense to start close to home. And so Electronic Arts has Homer-ised its long-running, award-winning World War II series, *Medal Of Honor*. The pastiche hits the ground running with exactly the right kind of sepia-toned montage and just the sort of orchestral score that makes you proud to be American (no matter where you were born). And then gets gloriously silly, with a series of hi-jinks featuring Homer and Bart in army fatigues and dangerous situations.

"This is one TV spin-off where the original writers have been involved"



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of *The Simpsons*

With the PSP edition the developers have introduced an 'innovative 3D into 2D technology'

The game has the real voice cast, the original show's script writers and more than 8,000 lines of dialogue

PSP

HGZine

THE SIMPSONS GAME

HOW COMPLETE?

95%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

85%

This one should make Electronic Arts lots of d'oh!

SEGA

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sumo Digital Ltd
Heritage: Virtua Tennis, Outrun: Coast 2 Coast
Link: www.sega.com
ETA: Early 2008

HANDS ON

Sega Superstars Tennis

Love-all?

In what could be a stroke of gaming genius, Sega has lumped together 15 of its most famous characters together for *Sega Superstars Tennis*, which will be available early next year for a range of consoles including the Nintendo DS.

Obvious characters like Sonic and AiAi from *Super Monkeyball* are included, but you can also expect to see lesser-known favourites like Ulala



It's not quite Wimbledon, is it?

Courts will be themed to the various Sega character, like Sonic for example

"Sega has lumped together 15 of its most famous characters"

from *Space Channel 5* (a rhythm action game) and Amigo from *Samba De Amigo* taking to the court, too.

As you'd expect, the game will be light on the technical aspects of tennis and heavy on the gameplay, with a range of gameplay options and a Tournament mode that gives you the opportunity to unlock extra characters and bonus features. ●



Bet you never thought you'd see Sonic holding a tennis racket

DS

HGZine
SEGA

HOW COMPLETE?

80%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

90%

Game, set and match to Sega?

DS



Publisher: THQ
Developer: THQ
Heritage: The Destroy All Humans series
Link: www.thq-games.com
ETA: Early 2008

FIRST LOOK

Destroy All Humans: Big Willy Unleashed

Prepare for an alien invasion!

It's been a while coming, but Crypto is finally making it to the PSP, as *Destroy All Humans: Big Willy Unleashed* (please stop sniggering at the back) is nearing completion for a release early next year.

Set in the 1970s, the game follows a similar format to the previous two, in that you play a marauding alien let loose on planet Earth. The major difference this time around though, is that you get to control the Willy of the game's title – a massive mascot for a fast-food chain – which is highly reminiscent of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man from the original *Ghostbusters* film.

We'll have an exclusive look at *Big Willy Unleashed* in issue 12, so come back then to find out more about this stunning-looking game. ●

"It's been a while coming, but Crypto is finally making it to the PSP"

Unique weaponry will play a bit part in Crypto's plans for world domination



To say that we're excited about this game is something of an understatement

PSP

HGZine

HOW COMPLETE?

75%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

95%

This could be another gaming gem for the PSP

HANDS ON

Star Wars: The Force Unleashed

Another Star Wars game is 'Forced' upon us...

Star Wars games on the consoles have always been a mixed bag – with the best ones by far being the two *Lego Star Wars* titles – but LucasArts are now hoping for more success with this, the latest game based on the *Star Wars* universe.

Set between the *Revenge of the Sith* and *A New Hope* films, you play an apprentice to Darth Vader who's been given the job of hunting down the remaining Jedi Knights. You've got the

full gamut of Jedi powers at your disposal, and can break, throw or move practically any object or person that you choose to.

We've also heard that George Lucas himself has worked on the storyline, so you can expect plenty of action and plenty of dodgy dialogue, too. ●

"You've got the full gamut of Jedi powers at your disposal"



The Force in action – although this obviously isn't an actual PSP screenshot

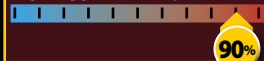


PSP
DS

HGZine

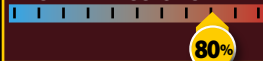


HOW COMPLETE?



90%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



80%

Should you give in to the Dark Side? Find out soon

PSP DS



Publisher: EA

Developer:

Fountainhead

Entertainment

Heritage: Doom

RPG (mobile)

Link: www.orcs

andelves.com

ETA: November

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to tell us what you think of Orcs & Elves



Where there's a dragon, there's always a big pile of gold, too

HANDS ON

Orcs & Elves

DS

Finally, a game that's good for your elf...

The title gives it away really, as this cunning RPG is full of both of them. You play a half elf who's given the task of battling through 12 sprawling levels, collecting treasure, defeating orcs and solving puzzles as you go on your merry way.

So far so fair, but the intriguing part about *Orcs & Elves* is that it's been created by id Software (of *Doom* and *Quake* fame), so rather than being forced to play through a turn-based RPG, the gameplay actually takes you through a smoothly scrolling first-person adventure.

Most of the basic movement and control is handled through the D-pad and buttons, but you're also able to use the touchscreen pad to solve puzzles and use magic.

Orcs & Elves is very different to traditional DS RPGs (*Zelda*, for example) and we think that could be its strongest advantage. id

are renowned for creating playable and visually attractive games, and if you fancy a spot of traditional role-playing but without the slow-moving gameplay that often comes with it, then *Orcs & Elves* could be just what you're looking for. ●



The DS's touchscreen is used here to great effect

"Orcs & Elves is very different to traditional DS RPGs"

DS

HGZine



HOW COMPLETE?



90%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS



75%

An RPG with added playability. We're interested

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PSP

WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2008

This year's instalment has all the right moves

Whether it's more high risk moves, cages matches, blood injuries or more ridiculous storylines (Vince McMahon faking his own death anyone?), the WWE is always pushing the boundaries. Recent versions of *SmackDown vs Raw* have been doing just that too, and the 2008 version is no different.

As well as the addition of ECW superstars and matches, the main new feature for 2008 is that each different wrestler in the game has been designated one of eight different

fighting styles – brawler, dirty, hardcore, high-flyer, powerhouse, submission, technical and showman – that dictates the type of moves they'll make. This not only allows each superstar to have more of their specific real-life moves, but it also means that you'll have to adapt your fighting style in order to get the best out of your chosen wrestler – making it more true-to-life.

Mode of conduct

The bulk of the game is based around its 24/7 mode, which works just like the real Raw, SmackDown and ECW shows do. You have to take your wrestler – there are a whopping 53 to choose from, including plenty of unlockable legends and ECW superstars – from zero to number one contender by getting involved in storylines and kicking butt in the ring. The whole thing plays out just like a real year in the WWE, with shows to grapple in, pay per views, training, crazy storylines and the ability to affect your character's storyline with the choices you make. If you've seen it in the WWE, chances are it'll be in this game.

Submission wrestlers possess some mean holds that are tough to break



"SmackDown vs Raw's 24/7 mode plays out just like a real year in the WWE"

As ever, from the wrestlers' authentic intro scenes to the backstage arguments complete with realistic commentary, *SvR* is wonderfully presented.

All this slick presentation comes at a price, though – the lengthy loading times can get frustrating, especially when you're chomping at the bit to get down to the action. But push that to the back of your mind, and you've got the ultimate wrestling game, and once you start building up your superstar's respect and winning main events, you won't be able to put it down. ●

Dave Perrett

Pick your favourite from the 53 superstars, including divas



Unfortunately there's no commentary during the matches, just non-stop heavy metal



Master your chosen wrestler's fighting style to become the number one contender

A TOUCH OF VIOLENCE

Hit 'em with your stick!

The DS version takes a totally different approach from the PSP game. Instead of bashing the buttons, in the DS game you control your moves by moving the stylus on the touchscreen. It's tricky to get the hang of at first, but after a while you'll be body slamming with the best of them.



HGZine
Verdict

Awesome WWE action – wrestling has never been so much fun

PSP



Scores of matches



53 superstars



Make the nasty rock music stop

9

PSP

SOCOM Tactical Strike

Don't fancy killing some terrorists? Then order four men to do it for you...

SOCOM has always been the thinking person's shooter – instead of wading in and pumping your enemies full of bullets, you have to plan your moves with stealth in mind and think... before pumping your enemies full of bullets. But *Tactical Strike* brings something new to the party. Instead of taking control in the first person, you're the boss of a squad of four crack special ops in the third person. Plus, instead of directly controlling the group and shooting or moving for them, you order them to move, shoot or do whatever action you wish, and they then carry out your command on their own. And while this different tactical system is tricky to get used to at first, after you've played through the tutorial level, you soon get hooked.

With so many commands available to you (should you use a sniper, creep about or throw a grenade through a

You'll get more points for stealth, but you can just wade in and take out the bad guys

If you're having a problem with a long-distance enemy, tell your sniper to take him out

You can equip each of your men with plenty of different items

Send two men into combat and get the other two to cover them somewhere else to confuse the enemy

Publisher: Sony
Developer: Slant Six Games
Heritage: Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror
Link: <http://uk.playstation.com/games-media/games/detail/item79430/>
SOCOM: U.S.-Navy-SEALs-Tactical-Strike
OUT NOW

IT TAKES TWO

The easy way to organise your troops

Well, two groups of two anyway. At any time you can split your team up into two groups of two in order to get one over on the enemy and gain a tactical edge. Flicking between the two teams is simple and instant – just tap R – and if you hold R, the two groups will become one again.

window to flush your enemies out?) you'd think that the controls would be difficult to master, but they're surprisingly intuitive, and commanding your men to do what you want when you want is refreshingly simple.

Mission mix

The missions usually involve taking out a load of criminals, rescuing hostages or destroying vehicles, and they offer a decent mix of outdoor and indoor combat, but they don't really give you instant gratification or a quick battle fix.

Each one can take upwards of an hour to complete, and you'll have to spend just as much time creeping around as engaged in combat.

Although it's not much like the other SOCOM games, *Tactical Strike* is superbly playable and exceptionally engrossing. It's not all great – the enemy AI could be sharper and you can sometimes find yourself wandering about aimlessly for lengthy periods, but *Tactical Strike* is immersive, atmospheric and, above all, thoroughly addictive. ●

Dave Perrett

"Tactical Strike is superbly playable and exceptionally engrossing"

HGZine Verdict *Gripping and addictive, this SOCOM is tactical perfection on PSP*

PSP

- Thoroughly engrossing
- Atmospheric music
- The AI could be better

8

PSP



Publisher: SCEE

Developer: Bend

Studio (Sony)

Heritage: Syphon Filter:

Dark Mirror

Link: www.us.playstation.

com/LogansShadow

OUT NOW



Syphon Filter: Logan's Shadow

Ah Mr Logan, we've been expecting you...

In some ways, Sony had an easy job with *Logan's Shadow*. All they really had to do was replicate 2006's excellent *Dark Mirror* and we'd all have been happy, but what they've actually done is give you everything that was good about the first game, plus a whole load more of new stuff. It would seem that Gabe's return could well be a massively triumphant one.

Everything about this game has a distinct whiff of quality about it. From the tight and well-scripted storyline (written by Greg Rucka of *Queen* and *Country* fame – no, we haven't heard of

him either) to the stunning graphics, impressive range of moves and enough variety of weaponry to level a small European country, it's a game that's truly hard to fault.

Firing blind

New features are many, but generally pretty small. Gabe can now 'blind fire' at enemies from behind objects – which comes in handy at least a couple of times in the game – and there are new underwater sections, too. There are also new 'Interactive Moments' where, like *God of War*, the game pauses while you're asked to press a sequence of buttons. You can now also use humans as guards to protect you from enemy fire, too.

The lengthy single-player mode is beefed up with a stunning range of multiplayer ones too, featuring seven game maps and five match types – deathmatch, team deathmatch, rogue agent, sabotage and retrieval – and you have full control over how you set up groups for online play, and even speak to team-mates over a headset.



Logan's looking better than ever, and so is his game



The new 'blind fire' option is a bit random, but it can be useful if you're low on health

"Everything about this game has a distinct whiff of quality about it"

FINE POINTS

Three of the finest moments in Logan's Shadow

- Silently sneaking up behind a guard, throwing him to the floor and kicking him squarely in the plums.
- Firing an electro line at an opponent, sending a charge through and watching them dance the electric boogaloo of death.
- Spending hours just swimming around and admiring the stunning water effects.



The graphics are stunning throughout

An argument over whose turn on the slide gets ugly.



HGZine
Verdict

A fine sequel to a superb game, Logan's return is a welcome one

PSP

- Visually stunning
- New moves and weapons
- Plenty of multiplayer options

9

Dean Mortlock

DS

Race Driver: Create & Race

Feeling creative? A little racy? Then this is for you

If you read our preview last issue, you'll know that we initially had our reservations about *Race Driver: Create and Race*, but then we played it.

What you've effectively got here is your typical *Race Driver* game, complete with all the officially licensed tracks (even the Nurburgring's in here), and

real-world cars, which you can then race in loads of different tournaments to your heart's content. However, as the game's on the DS, *Create and Race* does things a little differently, if you will, by making a few small changes.

The first thing you'll notice is that the handling is nowhere near as realistic – or unforgiving – as

the home console iterations. This is perfect for handheld gaming, as you don't really want the most realistic driving experience in the world when you're bumping down a pot-holed road on the back of the bus. With a great trade-off between arcade handling and realism, *Create and Race* works really well, and some advanced AI makes for some thrilling races, too.

Top gear

Graphically, *Create and Race* looks the business. While your car may sound more like a jumbo jet than a BMW, the game runs at a blisteringly fast 60 frames per second, with all sorts of fancy particle effects going on – and only very occasionally suffering from the slightest of slowdown. The wireless play also work incredibly well, as multiplayer games are lag-free even when playing with a single cart – although the tracks did take a bit too long to load for our liking.

However, the tour de force of *Create and Race* is by far the track editor. Effortlessly simple to use, the editor will

"The game runs at a blisteringly fast 60 frames per second"

either let you build tracks from scalextric-style pieces, or simply by drawing the track with your stylus. Once you've designed your course, you can set to work sticking in trees, windmills and other miscellaneous scenery to 'prettify' it, after which you can take it online.

Technically brilliant, with an almost perfect blend of arcade and realistic handling, *Race Driver: Create and Race* is an incredibly accomplished game. Get this, and cheer yourself up after Hamilton's bitter loss recently.

Ian Morris

We're guessing that this is a user-created track, judging by the randomness of it

It's a good-looking game, but it's also deeply playable, too

Simple yet powerful – the track editor at work

HGZine
Verdict

A must for both petrol heads and casual race fans alike

DS

- Great track editor
- Graphically brilliant
- Plenty of races and tracks

9

DS



Publisher: EA
Developer: EA
Heritage: MySims, The Urbz: Sims in the City
Link: www.thesims2.com/about/hh/index_castaway_ds.php
OUT NOW

The Sims 2: Castaway

Like one of the episodes of Lost where nothing whatsoever happens...

Some people seem to think that being washed up on a desert island could be a pleasant experience. We're inclined to believe it would be more similar to how Tom Hanks portrayed it in the film *Cast Away*, and that we'd turn into a scrawny, bearded nut-case that talks to a ball in a matter of days.

Unsurprisingly, *The Sims 2: Castaway* is much more focused on the fun side of being one of the few survivors of a cruise ship disaster. That's the bits that involve decorating your camp with shells and squashing bugs to make dyes out of for colourful new clothes.

Following the gameplay curve of countless *Sims* games before it, your experience starts out as an upward struggle comprised of gathering wood

to build a shelter out of, some vines to fashion a rope from and a bush to squat behind to do 'your business'.

Simulating control

Controlling your solitary Sim is done by tapping the screen where you want them to go, then tapping any interactive object to bring up a menu of options to choose from. It's a system reminiscent of old-school point-and-click adventures. Travelling around is fortunately sped up by the inclusion of a map screen that lets you warp straight to any area you've visited before.

It's possibly one of the most gently paced games we've played. It's also quite linear – so, for instance, you can't move onto a new section until you've helped a fellow castaway and received an item off them to chop down the vines blocking your path. These fetch quests can get a bit tedious, as can trying to remember where everything is on the island. It gets better the more you put in, but *Sims 2: Castaway* is definitely one of the weaker *Sims* games around.

Kath Brice

The game has a day and night cycle, plus weather that veers from sunny to stormy

There are other Sims on the island who have been shipwrecked. They don't ever seem too pleased to see you – instead they send you off to get them food

"Sims 2: Castaway is possibly one of the most gentle paced games we've played"

As well as leafy environments to explore, there are pirate ships and caves, and pools to go diving in

SURVIVAL SKILLS

Keeping it together in the wilderness

Like all *Sims* games, you have basic needs bars – six of them – to keep topped up, including ones for hunger, comfort and hygiene. At least it's quite easy to stay clean when you're surrounded by water – lucky, because you need a lot of baths when living on a diet of raw catfish and insects...



HGZine
Verdict

A unique Sims experience which is hard work but still rather fun

DS

- Exploring the island is fun
- Some great mini-games
- A lot of repetition quests

7

PSP



Publisher: Eidos

Developer: Crystal Dynamics

Heritage: Legacy of Kain, Tomb Raider Legend

Link: www.tombraider.com/anniversary

OUT NOW



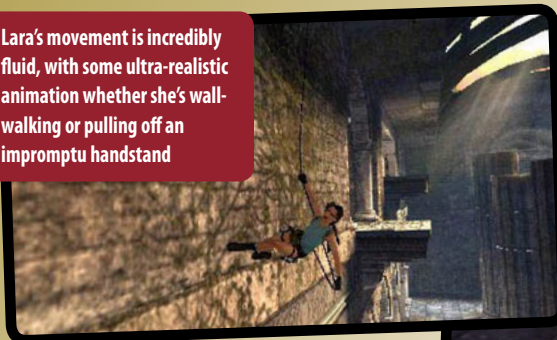
Tomb Raider: Anniversary

Celebrate Lara's tenth birthday in style with this perfectly pitched platforming port

Tomb Raider was a gargantuan smash in its day, kickstarting the career of Lara Croft as one of gaming's most famous characters – her posters were plastered across thousands of teenage boys' bedroom walls. Play the same game today, and what was then a classic has aged terribly. Fortunately for this celebratory anniversary edition, developer Crystal Dynamics has given the franchise a bit of spit and polish, affording Lara a set of moves she first learned in *Tomb Raider Legend*, and making her handle less like a tank and more like an acrobatic rival to Ubisoft's *Prince of Persia*. It's a delight to revisit those old environments, tweaked so subtly but brilliantly to both evoke nostalgia in gaming veterans and provide a fresh experience for a new generation of gamers. As an example of how to update a classic, Crystal Dynamics get an A+.

In porting the action to the PSP, a little gets lost in the translation, however. While it's possible to manually adjust the camera, it's not as flexible as in the PS2 version. And there are some framerate issues, too. There's nothing that's entirely ruinous, but it just means the small

Lara's movement is incredibly fluid, with some ultra-realistic animation whether she's wall-walking or pulling off an impromptu handstand

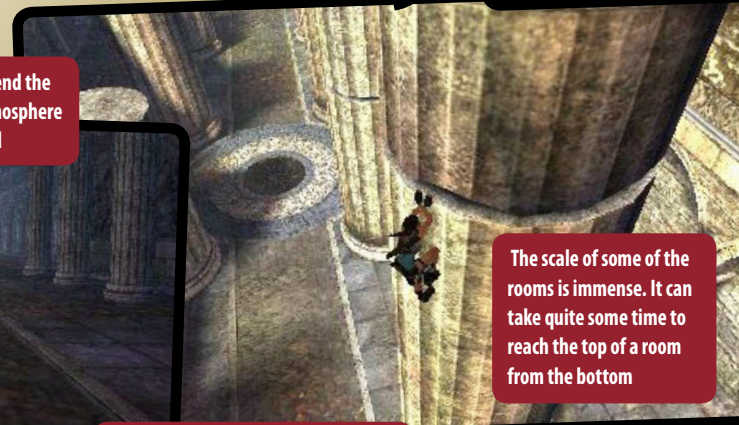


The polished looks lend the game even more atmosphere than it originally had

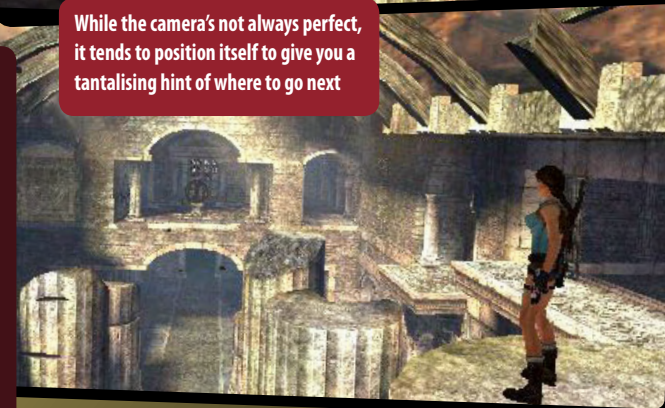


"If you've never played Tomb Raider before then you're in for a treat"

The scale of some of the rooms is immense. It can take quite some time to reach the top of a room from the bottom



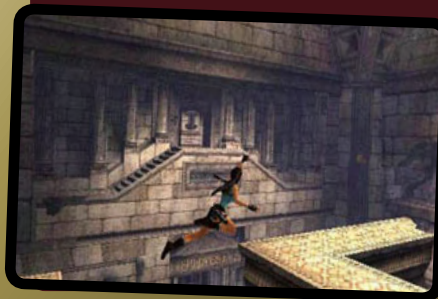
While the camera's not always perfect, it tends to position itself to give you a tantalising hint of where to go next



WANDER STUFF

How to get from A to B

The sense of achievement when you solve a particularly tricky puzzle, or find that hidden route through a sprawling room is huge. And some of the environments invoke a genuine sense of wonder, inviting you to marvel at the level design and the expert construction of the rooms. How to reach that ledge up there? You'll have loads of fun working it out.



Niggles and wiggles

But let's not get carried away with the negatives. Niggles aside, *Anniversary* is a wonderful adventure that takes Lara through a series of gorgeous locales, swinging, rolling and wiggling her hips with the confidence of a character that knows what an icon she is. The puzzles are satisfying, and the platforming is better than it's ever been.

If you've never played *Tomb Raider* before, you're in for a treat. But even if you have, Lara's still got plenty to offer. She might be getting on a bit, but she can still provide a massively enjoyable gaming experience. Recommended. ●

Chris Schilling

HGZine
Verdict

A great update of an extremely well-Crafted adventure

PSP



Very close to the PS2 version



Plays better than the original



Some camera issues

8

DS

Horse Life

A fine filly indeed...

Publisher: Koch Media
Developer: Game Life
Heritage: Baby Life, Sea Life
Link: www.horselife.deepsilver.com
OUT NOW

As a 30-something videogames journalist, it's probably safe to assume that I'm not the leading authority on horses. In fact, apart from one embarrassing incident that doesn't need to be shared with thousands of readers, I've never come close to riding on one. But I do have a daughter that thinks that *Horse Life* is the best thing since the Spice Girls reunion, so that's more than good enough for me.

The easiest way to describe *Horse Life* is to imagine *Nintendogs*, but with rather larger animals. You start the game by being introduced to your trainer, picking the style of your horse and then being gently guided through the game's in-depth tutorial. But despite the fact that there are multiple events to take part in, food to buy and cleaning to be done, the intuitive

control method means that you're never likely to be stuck for long.

Horsing around

As you'd expect, most of the control of your horse is done via the stylus. A tap on its back gets it moving, and another in the same place speeds it up. Slowing your horse down is simply a case of tapping it on the back of its head. When you arrive at a jump, a circle appears onscreen, followed by another that follows a line across the screen – follow this line with your stylus and the horse will successfully clear the jump.

There's no doubt that this is a very thorough and playable horse simulation, and anyone with more than a passing interest in our equine friends is sure to find it delightful, but it does have some stiff competition on the market, as the equally playable *Pippa Funnell 2: Farm Adventures* and *My Horse And Me* enter the DS horse sim stalls. But if you do find yourself struggling at the games store, we suggest you go for *Horse Life*, as it's a very playable, rewarding and easy to grasp game. ●

Dean Mortlock

HORSE CODE

Equine care for beginners

There's more to owning your own horse than just cantering through the woods, as you'll need to keep it clean and groomed, too. You'll also need to make sure that it's well-fed – all the food and snacks you'll need can easily be bought at the tack shop.



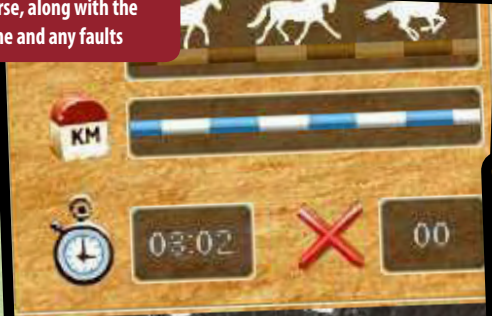
A couple of hours with the stylus and you too will be able to do this



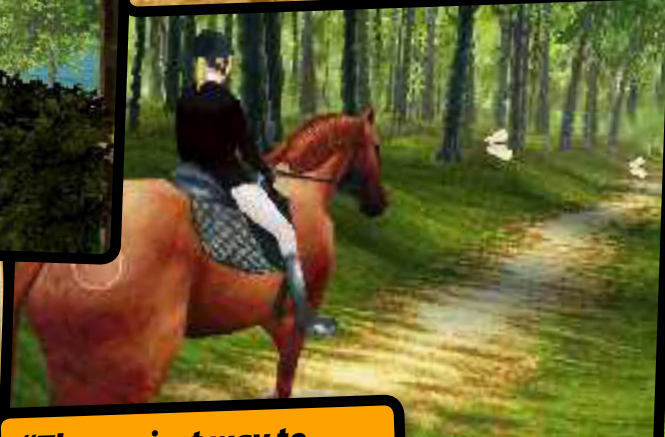
Get the timing right with the onscreen prompts and you'll get a perfect grade for your jump



The top screen shows the current speed of your horse, along with the time and any faults



This is your new foal at the start of the game, just after you've picked its colour scheme



"The easiest way to describe Horse Life is to imagine Nintendogs but with larger animals"

When you need to give your horse a ride out, you can head into the woods

HGZine
Verdict

A surprisingly fun and detailed horse sim. Recommended

DS

- Superb horse graphics
- Simple and intuitive controls
- Loads of game modes

8

Deal or no Deal

So what's the deal?

There's no denying that *Deal or no Deal* is a highly watchable TV show but is the virtual version of the game as compelling? Taking away the banter between the contestants and the box holders, and you're left with something that's little more than a game of chance. You pick a selection of boxes and the amounts are revealed, before the Banker calls up to make a deal for you. There's very little skill involved in the basic game and little incentive to take the Banker's offers.

Unlock the Forfeit mode and things improve slightly, though. This multiplayer game replaces money with forfeits (such as 'You must clean the windows') and is by far the most enjoyable part of the game, but it's not enough to make us recommend it.

Deal or no deal? Sadly, this time we're going to take the money and run. ●

Dean Mortlock

"Deal or no Deal is little more than a game of chance"



Pick your box, and pray that it's one of the small amounts

HGZine
Verdict

Authentic, but it's also far too random to be an essential purchase

DS

- Accurate translation
- The Forfeit mode is good fun...
- ...but it's all too random

6

World Championship Snooker 2007-08

A maximum break, or massively broken?

Having the overhead view is a real bonus

We must admit that we took a sharp intake of breath when we heard that the popular *World Snooker Championship* series was coming to DS. I mean, all that complicated ball physics on something that small? It'll never work...

Thankfully though, it does. The twin screens are used to great effect to display both overhead and 3D views of the table, and control of the cue ball is done through the D-pad or the stylus – although, to be honest, we think that we preferred the finer control of the D-pad.

It's obviously a bit rougher around the edges than the PSP version, but the physics are spot-on, and there's a wide enough range of

"There's enough game modes to keep you playing for weeks"

game options and modes to keep you playing for weeks. You also get the excellent commentary by John Virgo, Steve Davis and John Parrott, too. ●

Dean Mortlock



Publisher: Koch Media
Developer: Blade Interactive
Heritage: World Snooker Championship 2007, World Pool Challenge
Link: www.bladeinteractive.com/snookerds.html
OUT NOW

DS



The computer-controlled characters will give you a good game of snooker

HGZine
Verdict

About as perfect a snooker game as you'll get on the DS

DS

- Good ball physics
- Having two table views helps
- Plenty of game modes

8



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REVIEW ROUND-UP PSP



"A stylish RPG with plenty of depth and stunning graphics, that's Jeanne D'Arc"



Thrillville: Off The Rails

Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: Frontier Games

Some multi-format releases work better on the home consoles, but *Thrillville* seems more at home on handhelds. *Off The Rails* is also available on DS, but the PSP game is comfortably superior. Its park-building mechanics are moderately entertaining, but the trump card is its mini-games. True, some duffers sour the recipe, but you'll find a good few fun diversions ideal for whiling away a train journey or five. Multiplayer awkwardness means families might prefer the PS2/360 versions, but for the solo player this isn't a bad bet at all.



- Double Dragon clone, Bandito Chinchilla!
- Something for everyone
- Repetitive and limited in places

Not that thrilling, but fun for a while **7**

Jackass: The Game

Publisher: Red Mile Entertainment
Developer: Sidhe Interactive

Jackass director Jeff Tremaine has injured himself and it's up to you to 'direct' seven episodes of the show. Each contains five stunts, ranging from shopping trolley racing to egg gulping (and then the subsequent vomiting) tasks. As you'd expect, the games are a mixed bag – and some have awful controls, too. But snuffy critics be damned, as it's genuinely funny in places, and benefits from voice work from the cast and decent in-game likenesses for added authenticity. Longevity is added by unlockables and a fine stunt editor.



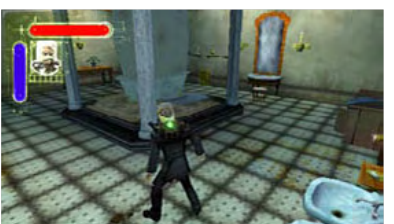
- Captures the feel of the show
- Party Boy makes us giggle
- A couple of dreadful mini-games

Gross, grotesque – and funny, too **7**

Dead Head Fred

Publisher: D3 Publisher
Developer: Vicious Cycle

If the PSP has one problem it's that it doesn't have enough brand new original games. So when something like *Dead Head Fred* comes out, we should all carry it on our shoulders through the streets and chant its name until we're blue in the face. It's the story of a decapitated ex-cop who is resurrected (sans noggin, naturally) to exact a gruesome revenge upon the perpetrators. The gameplay is pretty decent action-adventuring stuff, but it's the streak of original oddness (and hilarious swearing) throughout that makes it one to lose your head over.



- Profane, peculiar protagonist
- Head-swapping mechanic works so well
- Too weird for some?

Entertaining, funny, bizarre... **9**

SWAT: Target Liberty

Publisher: Sierra
Developer: 3G Studios

As isometric tactical shooters go, *SWAT: Target Liberty* isn't bad. Unfortunately, PSP already has *Killzone: Liberation*, and sadly this doesn't stand the comparison. Controls are clunky, you move as if through treacle (the 'run' command is more like walking pace), your gung-ho team-mates ruin your no-kill bonus and stages are all very similar in gameplay, if not looks. Pity, as there's a lot of detail packed in the environments, and a few thrilling sniper moments. And the multiplayer's good fun, too. Not bad, but *Killzone* does it better.



- Looks the part
- A couple of minor bugs
- Little variety

Worth a rent, but no more **6**

Recommended PSP Releases

Recent stuff you should try

Wipeout Pulse (Sony)
Superb futuristic racing sequel – so fast it'll melt your eyeballs

Sega Rally (Sega)
Stunningly beautiful arcade racer that you should buy immediately

Jeanne D'Arc (Sony)
Glorious turn-based RPG from the genre masters, Level 5

Monster Hunter Freedom 2 (Capcom)
Massive, deep, beast-bashing RPG from Japan. A stunner





REVIEW ROUND-UP

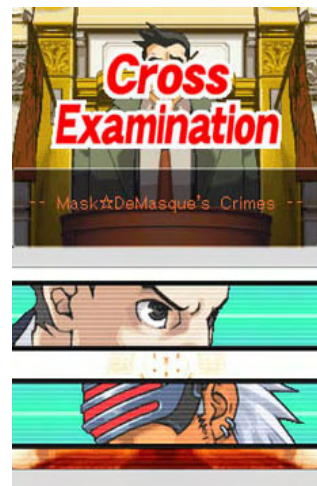
DS

Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney – Trials and Tribulations



Publisher: Capcom | Developer: Capcom

This third game in the *Ace Attorney* series sees Phoenix hang up his blue suit in preparation for the arrival of *Apollo Justice* next year. Shame, because if you've been following the series you'll be totally hooked on Wright's wonderful world.



Thankfully, *TaT* is a fitting finale for our hero. A brilliant story arc ties everything neatly together (including the first two games), and there's more quirky humour and thrilling courtroom action than ever. Obtuse logic remains, but this is essential if you loved 1 and 2.

- 👍 Astonishing climax
- 👍 New prosecutor Godot is amazing
- 👎 Some annoying sticking points

Funny, sad, exciting – Phoenix goes out on a high

9

Luminous Arc

Publisher: Rising Star | Developer: Marvelous

The strategy-RPG genre is a strange beast, as finding the right mix of tactical scraps and levelling up is a tricky task. *Luminous Arc* seems to have found a decent blend, but squanders things a little with funereal pacing. Tapping through banal conversations is one thing, but the clunky interface (about eight taps are required for the simplest instruction) ruins the otherwise decent stylus controls. It's plenty deep, but the slow start will put off all but the most patient player. Pity.



- 👍 Plenty of hidden depths – some will love it
- 👎 Snore-inducingly slow
- 👎 Reams of dialogue

Slightly Dull Arc, more like

6

Sight Training

Publisher: Nintendo | Developer: Namco-Bandai Games

Not content with exercising our brains with Dr. Kawashima, Nintendo is now asking us gamers to combat our failing eyesight by... looking at a screen some more. In fairness, *Sight Training* – despite its dubious medical claims – is an entertaining collection of mini-games that might just increase your visual sharpness or hand-eye co-ordination slightly over time. Maybe.

Presentation is a little sterile for the basic tests, but the sporting extras are highly enjoyable,



particularly a speedy table tennis rallying task. Fun, but in small doses.

- 👍 Fun sports games
- 👍 Accessible to everyone
- 👎 Lacking in charisma – no Kawashima gags here

Push-ups for your peepers

7

Recommended DS Releases

Recent unmissable goodies

Jam Sessions (Ubisoft)

Your DS is an acoustic guitar in Ubisoft's stylish stylus strummer

Legend of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass (Nintendo)

We gave this 10/10 – play it and you'll see why. Mesmerising

Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights (THQ)

The DS is short of good racers, so this pimped-out ride is a real treat

Sonic Rush Adventure (Sega)

The blue one has his mojo back in the DS's second great Sonic game





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PCGZine

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Modern life isn't rubbish.

HALF-LIFE ORANGE BOX

Better on PC or Xbox 360?

GEARS OF WAR

The 360 game hits the PC. With extras.

SUPCOM: FORGED ALLIANCE

The RTS gets a second helping.

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MOBILE REVIEWS

All the latest from the world of mobile phone gaming



Blades and Magic

Publisher: Player X

Role-playing games aren't particularly well suited for the mobile phone platform, as they're ideally played in mammoth sessions rather than short bursts. However, *Blades and Magic* succeeds in shrinking down the RPG blueprint for portable play without sacrificing all the parts that fans love so much, making this a highly recommended purchase.

- Amazing 3D graphics
- Stunning depth
- Poor storyline

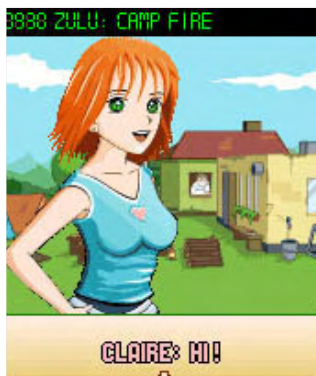
D&D, miniaturised

8

SimBabe 2

Publisher: Nostromo

The idea behind *SimBabe 2* is to attract a female at Summer Camp by completing tasks, buying her gifts and generally proving yourself to be more 'worthy' than the other hot-blooded males. The visuals are pretty nice but it's a rather shallow experience, punctuated by some hilarious grammar ('Are you going to disturb with sound?'). Fun for a while, but the limited gameplay quickly becomes dull and predictable.



- Good presentation
- Repetitive gameplay
- A bit shallow

Fun in parts, but not for too long

5



Army of Heroes

Publisher: HandyGames

Everyone likes to see a good ruckus (well, we certainly do), but have you ever wondered about the hours of planning that must go into preparing for such an epic struggle? Well ponder this no further, as *Army of Heroes* allows you to experience the thrill of military logistics first hand. Puzzle-like in nature, the game involves shepherding human, orc and elf forces along a set of pathways, with the ultimate aim of getting to the battlefield on time. Interesting stuff and a game design that seems to work very well on the mobile format.

- Interesting concept
- Taxes the grey matter
- Slightly repetitive

An original fantasy game

7

WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2008 3D

Publisher: THQ Wireless

It may be just a bunch of guys in tight shorts hugging each other and acting out fake storylines, but WWE still boasts a massive worldwide following, hence this 3D grappling escapade. The visuals are neat (if a little blocky) and with a raft of features, including a career mode and the ability to customise the appearance of your brawler, you'd think WWE fans would be onto a winner here but sadly the gameplay is far too basic to be enjoyable.



- Excellent 3D graphics
- A good range of modes
- Primitive gameplay

Good graphics, poor gameplay

7



RECOMMENDED
Four mobile games you must own

Critter Crunch

(Disney)

This bug gobbler is the finest puzzle game we've played in years.

Burnout

(EA Mobile)

Very good, but it does lose a bit in translation.

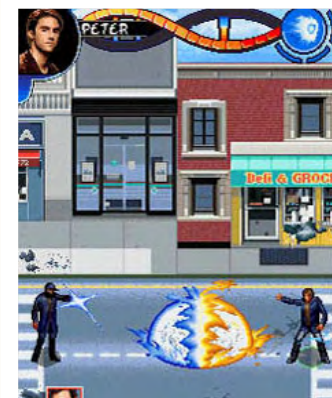
SolaRola

(Eidos)

A cheeky homage to the PSP's *LocoRoco*.

Tower Defence: Wrath of Gods

Solid and dependable, this is medieval mobile strategy at its finest.



Heroes: The Official Mobile Game

Publisher: Gameloft

We weren't exactly looking forward to this licensed release – games based on TV shows are usually a bit underwhelming – but *Heroes* manages to entertain and stay true to the subject matter. Predictably, the heroes with the least impressive powers are relegated to brief cameo appearances, with Niki, Hiro and Peter presenting the three playable options. Although the gameplay isn't going to set the world alight, there's plenty of variety and the presentation is second to none.

- Excellent production values
- Faithful to the series
- Control could be better

Holding out for a hero? Try this

8

WIN! TOP SOCOM KIT! Exclusive SOCOM hooded tops up for grabs

- SOCOM is one of our star games this month, and to celebrate that fact we've managed to talk Sony into giving us 10 limited edition and deeply desirable hooded tops to give away to you lot. The hoodies have a small SOCOM logo on the front and a larger image on the back and are the perfect item to celebrate your love for tactical army warfare.



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Your questions answered and your fears put to rest, courtesy of HGZine!

READER FEEDBACK!
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I DECIDED TO BUY A PSP last month, but I'm a bit worried about future games. Sure, there are already plenty of good ones out there in the shops, but I've been looking for some games that are coming out in the new year and there aren't that many compare to the DS. Is the PSP finished? Should I have bought a DS instead?

Warren Schofield, Leicester

>> While it's true to say that there are more games coming out for the DS, there's still plenty to get excited about for PSP, too. We know for a fact that Sony has plenty of surprises up its sleeve for 2008 on

the PSP, but they just haven't announced anything yet.

Don't worry Warren, there's plenty of life in the PSP yet.

I SAW YOUR REVIEW of *Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights* in the last issue and don't agree with you. You said you liked it and gave it 8, but I reckon it's even better than that and should have got at least a 9. Did you play the game for long enough, because I think you got it wrong this time. Apart from that the magazine is brilliant though, so please keep up the good work.

Lee Crook, Harrogate

>> Ah Lee, the thing is that everyone's got a different opinion and that's what makes us human and interesting. A review is only ever a single person's opinion and different people are obviously likely to have differing ones.

Maybe we should start a reader review section of the mag, so that if you really disagree with one of our reviews, then you can write your own and we'll publish it in the mag. Good idea? Let us know.

I READ THE LETTER last month about the fight between Gabe Logan, Kratos and Agent 47, and although you said that Kratos would win, I reckon that Agent 47 would have them – they just wouldn't see him coming!

Dave Flynn, Derby

>> You might be right about that Dave, but I guess we'll never know for sure. Next...



Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights – we think it deserved an 8, but Lee wanted more...

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR REVIEWERS FROM? I'm sure I've seen some of them in other magazines.

Greg Masterson, London

>> You're right Greg, our reviewers do indeed work on other games magazines. We make sure that we only use the finest and most experienced games players and journalists on the planet, and that way you can be assured that the reviews you're reading are written by people who really know their games, and are also deeply passionate about playing them, too.

The argument is officially over, apparently Agent 47 is the toughest character in games



GAME MATTERS

Your thoughts on the games you really want to play...

WHAT'S THE SCARIEST game on the PSP? My mate reckons that it's going to be *Silent Hill Origins*, but I think it's old hat now.

Gary Blamande, Cardiff

>> Trust us Gary, time does not dull the horror that is *Silent Hill*. We know that it's going to be the most terrifying game around, and by quite some way.

FOOTBALL MANAGER LOOKS dull to me. Can you really play a game with all that stats on such a small screen? I think not.

Tim, Exeter

>> It all depends how much you love football. We're all big fans here at HGZine, and we think that the developers have done an excellent job – check out our review of *Football Manager Handheld 2008* very soon.

MY SISTERS LOVE HORSE GAMES, but I think that they're pointless and rubbish. Why do the games companies keep making them?

Bilbo, Lyon

>> Lots of girls now play games and that's only a good thing. Games like *Horse Life* take this into account, and they're really good fun... honest.

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